

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4336

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 1315

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, UY

SUBJ: AN IMPRESSIVE MAY DAY, BUT WITH DISSENT FROM THE LEFT

1. WHILE THE 1973 MAY DAY RALLY WAS NOT " THE LARGEST IN URUGUAYAN HISTORY", AS COMMUNIST- LED CNT CONFEDERATION CLAIMED, TURNOUT WAS A RESPECTABLE 40-50,000 (EMBASSY ESTIMATE), SIMILAR TO SIZE OF CROWDS IN PREVIOUS YEARS. THIS YEAR' S ACTIVITIES MARKED BY DEGREE TO WHICH DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMUNIST MAJORITY WITHIN CNT AND ITS MORE RADICAL OPPOSITION HAVE NOW COME OUT INTO THE OPEN. LATTER GROUP, CALLING ITSELF " LA CORRIENTE" (THE CURRENT) HAS NOW PUBLISHED ITS OWN WEEKLY AS HAS THE ROE (WORKER- STUDENT RESISTENCE MOVEMENT, RELATED TO THE OPR-33 TERRORIST GROUP). BOTH ROE AND " CORRIENTE" PAPERS CRITICIZED THE CNT' S LEADERSHIP FOR MINIMIZING THE COMBATATIVE ASPECT OF MAY DAY ACTIVITIES, CITING THE ELIMINATION OF A PLANK IN THE CNT' S MAY DAY PLATFORM CALLING FOR THE LIBERATION OF " POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PRISONERS". THAT THE COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP OF CNT IS IN FACT ATTEMPTING TO REDUCE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT WITH THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY IS ALSO SUGGESTED BY MOVING THE PLANK CALLING FOR RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT BORDABERRY TO LAST PLACE IN MAY DAY PLATFORM, WHEREAS IN ITS MARCH 29 RALLY PLATFORM (MVD 950), BORDABERRY' S REMOVAL LED THE LIST. EMPHASIS IN YESTERDAY' S PLATFORM WAS ON ECONOMIC ISSUES (WAGES, ETC.) AND OPPOSITION TO TRADE UNION LEGISLATION.

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2. " U. S. IMPERIALISM" RECEIVED ITS USUAL SHARE OF DENUNCIATION BY MAY DAY ORATORS. CNT PRESIDENT JOSE D' ELIA TOLD THE RALLY THAT A VIETNAMESE DELEGATION WAS DENIED PERMISSION BY GOU TO BE PRESENT. HE LAUDED CHILE AND PRESENTED JUAN PONCE, REPRESENTING CHILEAN CUT. D' ELIA ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT CNT LEADER ENRIQUE PASTORINO, PRESIDENT OF THE WFTU, HAD BEEN AWARDED LENIN PEACE PRIZE FOR 1972.

3. COMMENT: ONCE AGAIN THE CNT DEMONSTRATED ITS ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITIES. FACT THAT AS MANY AS 50,000 PARTICIPATED IN THESE MAY DAY DEMONSTRATIONS IS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT, AS THERE IS NO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (OR ANY OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY) ON MAY 1. AS LIKELIHOOD FOR DIRECT CONFRONTATION BETWEEN CNT AND MILITARY INCREASES (PRESS REPORTS THAT GOU WILL SHORTLY INTRODUCE ITS PROPOSED LABOR LAW), THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YESTERDAY' S RALLY BECOMES GREATER, RECONFIRMING FOR THE MILITARY THE ORGANIZATIONAL AN NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF THE CNT. WHILE " LA CORRIENTE" AND ROE DO NOT PRESENTLY CONSTITUTE A THREAT TO THE COMMUNIST CONTROL OF THE CNT, THESE TWO GROUPS WILL BECOME MORE OF A DIVISIVE AND RADICALIZING FORCE WITHIN THE CNT IN THE EVENT OF A CONFRONTATION WITH THE MILITARY.
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